

# SWANN ACTS TO CLEAR UP RUTH CRUGER MYSTERY

**FINAL**  
EDITION

**The**

**Evening**

**World.**

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## HOUSE BILL LIMITS ARMED NEUTRALITY; WILSON OPPONENTS CALLED COPPERHEADS

### STORY OF LACONIA SINKING IS TOLD BY AN EYEWITNESS; NO PANIC IN THE LIFEBOATS

Boat Didn't Even Know What Vessel It Sank and Made No Effort to Rescue People Who Were Perishing in Open Lifeboats.

Floyd P. Gibbons of the Chicago Tribune was aboard the Laconia, on his way to his post in London, when she was torpedoed. His vivid story is not only the first detailed description of that disaster but is the first description by a trained writer of the destruction of a liner, or any other vessel, by a U boat. As such it ranks as one of the most remarkable stories of the war.

By Floyd P. Gibbons.  
(Copyright, 1917, by the Chicago Tribune.)

QUEENSTOWN, Feb. 26 (via London, Feb. 28).—I have serious doubts whether this is a real story. I am not entirely certain that it is not all a dream and that in a few minutes I will wake up back in stateroom 919 on the promenade deck of the Cunarder Laconia and hear my cookery steward informing me with an abundance of "and sir" that it is a fine morning.

It is now a little over thirty hours since I stood on the slanting decks of the big liner, listened to the lowering of the lifeboats, heard the hiss of escaping steam and the roar of ascending rockets as they tore lurid red in the black sky and cast their red glare over the roaring sea.

I am writing this within thirty minutes after stepping on the dock here in Queenstown from the British mine sweeper which picked up our open lifeboat after an eventful six hours of drifting and darkness and baling and pulling on the oars and of straining aching eyes toward that empty, meaningless horizon in search of help. But, dream or fact, here it is:

The Cunard liner Laconia, 18,000 tons burden, carrying seventy-three passengers—men, women and children—of whom six were American citizens—manned by a mixed crew of 216, bound from New York to Liverpool and loaded with foodstuffs, cotton and war material, was torpedoed without warning by a German submarine last night off the Irish coast. The vessel sank in about forty minutes.

Two American citizens, mother and daughter, listed from Chicago and former residents there, are among the dead. They were Mrs. Mary E. Hoy and Miss Elizabeth Hoy. I have talked with a seaman who was in the same lifeboat with the two Chicago women, and he has told me that he saw their lifeless bodies washed out of the sinking boat.

United States Consul Frost at Cork reported to the embassy in London yesterday that Mrs. Hoy and her daughter had escaped in a lifeboat which was swamped. They were picked up, he said, by another boat, but soon died from exposure. They were buried at sea.

**LAST WOMAN TO LEAVE WAS SAVED.**

The American survivors are Mrs. F. E. Harris of Philadelphia, who was the last woman to leave the Laconia; the Rev. Father Wareing of St. Joseph's Seminary, Baltimore; Arthur T. Kirby of New York, and myself.

A former Chicago woman, now the wife of a British subject, was among the survivors. She is Mrs. Henry George Boston, the daughter of Granger Farwell of Lake Forest.

After leaving New York, passengers and crew had had three drills with the lifeboats. All were supplied with lifebelts and assigned to places in the twelve big lifeboats poised over the side from the davits of the top deck.

Submarines had been a chief part of the conversation during the entire trip, but the subject had been treated lightly, although all ordered precautions were strictly in force.

After the first explanatory drill on the second day out from New York, from which we sailed on Saturday, Feb. 17, the "abandon ship" signal, five quick blasts of the whistle, had summoned us twice to our lifebelts and heavy wraps (with a flask and a flashlight) and to a roll call in front of our assigned boats on the top deck.

On Sunday we knew generally where we were—or at least the passengers did not. In the afternoon, during a short chat with Capt. W. R. D. Irvine, the ship's commander, I had mentioned that I would like to see a chart and note our position on the ocean. He replied, "Oh, would you?" with a smiling, rising infection that meant "It is jolly well none of your business."

Prior to this my cheery early morning steward had told us that we would make Liverpool by Monday night, and I used this information in another question to the Captain.

"When do we land?" I asked.

"I don't know," replied Capt. Irvine; but my steward told me later it would be Tuesday, after dinner.

The first cabin passengers were gathered in the lounge Sunday evening, with the exception of the bridge friends in the smoke room. "Poor Butcher" was dying wearily on the talking machine and several couples were dancing.

About the tables in the smoke room the conversation was limited to the announcement of bids and orders to the stewards. Before the fire-place was a little gathering which had been dubbed as the Hyde Park

### FOOD TO TUMBLE 30 PERCENT. HERE IN NEXT 48 HOURS

Dealers and City's Experts Agree—Price Drop Won't Be Permanent.

DISORDER ON DECLINE.

East Side Poultry Men Admit Boycott is Ruining Them—Conference is Asked.

There is to be a general slump in all foodstuffs sold direct to the consumer within the next forty-eight hours. It will probably be from 20 to 30 per cent. lower than present prices, but it is not going to be permanent.

This was the statement made today to The Evening World by managers of big grocery stores and the owners of stores on side streets. Commissioners Hartigan and Dillon expect such a slump, as does P. Q. Foy, the food expert, but none will say that it is to be permanent.

It was thought potatoes would have gone down considerably this morning in retail stores on account of yesterday's extraordinary wholesale reductions, but consumers will not get the benefit of that break for two or three days.

Some stores, especially the high class ones, reduced the price of potatoes 20 cents a bushel last Monday.

The manager of a large Chambers Street store announced today the following retail prices:

Potatoes \$3.50 a bushel, a reduction of 20 cents since last Saturday. This reduction went into effect Monday morning.

Fresh eggs 45 cents a dozen, and going down every day.

Butter 45 cents a pound, and likely to stay at that price for a week or so.

"We will not feel the recent wholesale slump in potatoes," said the manager of this store, "until tomorrow or the day after. Many of the small stores bought at high prices and probably have a good supply on hand. The big wholesale slump was undoubtedly due to the publicity."

It seems to have loosened up the farmers on Long Island, anyhow. We always felt there were large stores of potatoes on Long Island. They're coming in now. But the public ought not to be overjoyed at these drops at hand and drops expected. My opinion is that none of them will be permanent. There has been no extraordinary change in the retail cost of other food products that I know of."

The biggest drop will be in eggs. They will be selling to the consumer at 45 cents a dozen before the week is over and they are expected to go down to 40 cents very shortly. Supplies are coming in plentifully.

On the produce exchanges neither onions nor potatoes were in demand today. The dealers refused to buy onions at \$3 a bag, a reduction of 44 from last week. And there were no takers for wholesale lots of potatoes at \$5.50 and \$1 for 145 pounds. There is a reduction of from \$2 to \$2.75. This is probably the last break in potatoes before the end of the week.

Wholesale and retail dealers in poultry on New York's East Side admitted this afternoon that the boycott of Jewish and Italian housewives has paralyzed the poultry market and is fast wrecking their business.

They made the admission to Food Commissioner Hartigan and asked him for a conference, through which they hope to obtain a compromise with the women.

There are hundreds of carloads of chickens lying on the tracks of various railroads, but nobody is buying them. The speculators are losing from

### COCCHI KNOWS KIDNAPPER OF RUTH CRUGER, SAYS WIFE; THAT'S WHY HE DISAPPEARED

Willing to Come Back and Tell If Promised Immunity From "Hounding."

SWANN AIDS IN HUNT.

Mrs. Cocchi and Another Woman Taken to District Attorney's Office.

Mrs. Alfredo Cocchi, wife of the machinist whose shop at No. 542 West One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Street was the last place at which Ruth Cruger, missing fifteen days, is known to have been, was served with a subpoena by Detective Coniff of the District Attorney's office this afternoon and compelled to accompany the detective to the Criminal Courts Building. With her Coniff also took a Mrs. Peterson who has been aiding Mrs. Cocchi in caring for her children since Cocchi disappeared after the police questioned him regarding Miss Cruger.

Mrs. Cocchi did not want to accompany the detective. She showed a disposition to get away from him, promising she would meet him at the machine shop later. Falling in this she sent the errand boy who has been helping her to the shop to telephone to a number which, she said, he would find written on the wall near the shop telephone. Detective Coniff had another detective accompany the boy to make a note of the number called.

Henry D. Cruger, father of Ruth, called at District Attorney Swann's office today to ask for aid in the search for the girl.

To Assistant District Attorney Doelling Mr. Cruger said he had just visited Mrs. Cocchi, and she gave him to understand, Mr. Cruger said, that she knows where her husband is, and that she knows where her husband has been since he left the shop and his home after the police questioned him about Miss Cruger.

The woman said she thought her husband could be persuaded to come back and tell all he knew about Ruth Cruger's disappearance if it could be arranged that the police and private detectives would not hound him or try to fasten on him guilt that was another's. She intimated that Cocchi had run away because he knew the man who abducted the girl, and thought his failure to tell the police about him might be made a charge of complicity.

Mr. Doelling said he would arrange anything in reason Mrs. Cocchi asked if Cocchi were not actually guilty. The detectives have been considerably puzzled by a marked change in the behavior of the wife of Cocchi.

For several days she sat about in tears, much of the time talking in Italian to her baby, which is only a few months old, telling of her sorrow because she did not know where the father was.

For the last day or two she has been very cheery, making sharp and biting replies to the detectives on their daily calls and seemingly not at all worried about her husband's whereabouts.

**SAILING TO-DAY.**

Algonquin, Turks Island 3 P. M.  
Apache, Jacksonville 8 A. M.  
Finland, Liverpool 8 A. M.

**THE WORLD TRAVEL BUREAU**  
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At this hour it may be said that a declaration of war from Washington would find the German mind prepared for it. Less of a ripple would be caused here than was occasioned by Roumania's entrance in the war, and a final break with the United States would be likely to meet with indifference so far as the public at large is concerned. There is no feeling that a crisis is at hand, but merely an ominous tension which has been fostering immaturity. The nation is now plunging its faith in its hours.

The Chamberlain's speech was reflected with great accuracy by "Pucked" magazine. Against every suggestion of universal suffrage, for instance, it intimated that the "Pucked" magazine was a "Pucked" magazine.

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### BRINGS THRILLING ACCOUNT OF RAIDER IN SOUTH ATLANTIC

Captain of Hudson Maru, Here, Thinks Rover Was Fitted Out in Germany.

SAW MANY SHIPS SUNK

Bombs Placed in Prison Vessel to Cow Captives, Says First Officer.

The Japanese freighter Hudson Maru arrived at Staten Island today with forty-eight officers and crew who were for a week captives of the German commerce raider which sank a score of vessels in the South Atlantic early in January. The Hudson Maru was spared and used as a prison ship for the crews of the destroyed vessels. She took the prisoners into Pernambuco, Brazil, and then came to New York by way of the Barbadoes with her original cargo of castor beans, gum and hides from Bombay.

Capt. T. Takeshima went at once to the offices of the consignees in Manhattan, and First Officer G. Hayaashi related off the narrative of the ship's enforced service as a tender to the raider.

"We were about 300 miles off the coast of Brazil," he said, "in the afternoon of Jan. 5. We saw a vessel to the eastward, following a course parallel to ours. By 2 o'clock we could see that she was a cruiser, with schooner rigged masts, one funnel and her upper works painted yellow."

"She changed her course to cut across our bows. She was making about 16-17 knots an hour to our 7-8-9. At 2:30 o'clock she broke out the international signal 'MN,' meaning 'ship and be quick about it.' The captain ordered the crew to make ready to abandon the ship."

"A German officer with a squad of sailors armed with rifles came aboard, asked many questions and took all our papers."

"He left us for an hour or two and then came back with his sailors, a petty officer and a pair of bombs with electrical firing devices. These were sent down into our boiler rooms and attached to the sides of the ship."

"He then presented the petty officer to the captain and said, 'This man is now in command of this ship. You will obey him in everything. If you refuse to obey any of his commands he will not hesitate to shoot you and set off the bombs in your engine room.'"

"The raider left us and split off to the east in the morning of Jan. 7. We parted up with him as usual. He was taking all the week off a British freighter, the British ship of about 3,000 tons. At a little after 2 o'clock there was the sound of an explosion and in two minutes the freighter was gone."

"After the raider went on and on, we saw another explosion. The British ship was gone. The next morning we saw the North Sea, and a ship of 4,000 tons."

"A ship of the 10,000 tons was seen on Monday, Jan. 11, and was taken to the coast of Africa. The ship was a British freighter, the British ship of about 3,000 tons. At a little after 2 o'clock there was the sound of an explosion and in two minutes the freighter was gone."

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### "OTHER INSTRUMENTALITIES" IN BILL GIVING WILSON POWER REJECTED BY COMMITTEE

Also Prohibits the Insurance of Ships Carrying Munitions by the War Risk Bureau, but Provides for \$100,000,000 Bond Issue.

### MORE POWER THAN ASKED GIVEN BY SENATE BILL

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28.—In sharp contrast with the action last night of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in reporting a bill giving the President even greater power than he asked in protecting the commerce of the United States, and the lives of its citizens, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs today agreed upon a measure in which were incorporated two important restrictions. The committee struck out the authorization to use "other instrumentalities" than the arming of ships and inserted a provision prohibiting the War Risk Bureau from insuring ships carrying munitions.

The Senate bill meets with the approval of the President. In it is retained the blanket clause conferring on him further authority to "employ such other instrumentalities and methods as may, in his judgment and discretion, seem necessary." It also provides for arming ships both fore and aft.

The Democrat managers conferred on a programme for the remaining three days of the session. Majority Leader Kern said he was convinced every man who opposes passage of the Armed Neutrality Bill would soon be labelled a "Copperhead" by the people and that passage was assured.

Republican Leader Mann said he did not think there would be an extra session of Congress, but he qualified that with the statement that Senate Republicans might, of course, hold up appropriation bills and thus make one necessary.

### FOUR CONSULS HELD IN GERMANY AS HOSTAGES

Berlin Acts on Incorrect Information Regarding Former Official in United States.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28.—Four American Consuls are being detained in Germany, where the Berlin Government awaits official advice from all German Consuls in this country, of which in Central and South America have been reported to be held.

The German Government's action is based on information which, through the courtesy of the United States, reached the German Consul at Berlin, while he was on his way from America to Berlin, yesterday.

The American Consuls detained in Germany are Consul Henry C. A. Smith, transferred to Harbin, Turkestan, Consul John S. Wood, transferred from Constantinople to Messina, Sicily, Consul W. Bruce Wallace, transferred from Constantinople to Constantinople, and Consul C. J. Jones, transferred from Constantinople to Constantinople.

Two more have been reported from Germany as being held in the war zone. One is Consul C. J. Jones, transferred from Constantinople to Constantinople, and the other is Consul C. J. Jones, transferred from Constantinople to Constantinople.

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As reported by the House Committee the bill reads as follows:

"The President of the United States be and is hereby authorized and empowered to supply merchant ships, the property of citizens of the United States, and bearing register of the United States, with defensive arms, and also with the necessary ammunition and means of making use of them in defense against unlawful attack; and that he be and is hereby authorized and empowered to protect such ships and the citizens of the United States against unlawful attack while in their lawful and peaceful pursuits on the high seas."

**MIGHT USE THE NAVY EVEN UNDER THIS BILL.**

Although this eliminates the provision which would have empowered the President to "employ such other instrumentalities and methods as may, in his judgment and discretion seem necessary and adequate," it is argued in some quarters that it would not prevent him from using the navy to protect American lives and commerce.

The bill provides for a \$100,000,000 bond issue and authorizes the President to transfer some of the funds to the War Risk Insurance Bureau, but contains this phrase prohibiting insurance of munitions ships:

"Said Bureau of War Risk Insurance shall not insure any arms or ammunition or any vessel carrying arms and ammunition assigned to belligerent countries or any citizen thereof."

Chairman Flood said this provision would permit the arming and protection of munitions ships but would not permit their insurance by the Government. The Administration contends that munitions ships are protected by international law as well as any others against ruthless and

WEATHER—Snow or rain to-night.

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